Screen It! – Screen Stories, Games and Learning – Why?
THE MOVING IMAGE ‘In all its forms’

- Access collection
- Exhibitions
  - Screen Gallery (current exhibition *TV 50*)
  - Memory Grid
- Games Lab
- Production Studios
- Screen Education Unit
Games and screen texts immerse young people in highly appealing and complex worlds in which

- learning,
- engagement,
- communication and
- literacy practices

are very different to traditional school learning.
Screen stories, games and learning – Why?

Session outline

1. Some current thinking

2. Creating screen stories and learning

3. Video games and learning.
Students – Prensky’s *Digital Natives*

• over 10,000 hours playing videogames
• over 200,000 emails and instant messages sent and received
• over 10,000 hours talking on mobile phones
• over 20,000 hours watching TV
• over 500,000 commercials seen

And, maybe, *at the very most*, 5,000 hours of book reading.

*Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants, Part II*
Marc Prensky [http://www.marcprensky.com/writing](http://www.marcprensky.com/writing)
“Human brains alter profoundly to fit the technologies and practices that surround them.” **Mark Prensky ACMI March 2006**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>us</strong></th>
<th><strong>kids</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>conventional speed</td>
<td>twitch speed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>step by step</td>
<td>random access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>linear processing</td>
<td>parallel processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>text first</td>
<td>graphics first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stand alone</td>
<td>connectivity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Don’t bother me mom, I’m learning!* Mark Prensky Paragon House Minnesota 2006

Teachers —

Gee’s new ways of learning and thinking

Games force older people ...to confront new ways of learning and thinking. They really bring home the ways of learning we have ritualized and taken for granted and been rewarded for in the past, ways which often don't work that well in the modern world.

*What Video Games Have to Teach Us About Learning and Literacy* James Gee
discussion online

We have been taught that getting to one's goal as fast and efficiently as possible is what shows we are smart.

In contrast, games reward:

– exploration,
– non-linear thinking,
– re-thinking goals from time to time,
– and not always following instructions or the most obvious thing to do.

James Gee discussion online *The Chronicle of Higher Education* August 27 2005
New Times, New Literacies

Post-industrial, postmodern new times creates new texts, new technologies, new needs, new capacities
new literacies.

New communications media is shaping the way we use language

The literacies required and which emerged because of new times, are mostly multimodal … where the written-linguistic mode interrelates with the visual, audio, gestural and spatial patterns of meaning… and in different combinations.

J McGie unpublished paper for ACMI 2002

Annemaree O’Brien and Vincent Trundle ACMI 2006
Multimodal literacy

Contemporary views of literacy ... multiliteracies ....encompass notions of active citizenship, new communications practices and information technologies, critical thinking and linguistic and cultural diversity.

A multiliteracies approach enables students to understand, use and critically evaluate the multimodal texts of the 21st century... with a strong focus on students designing their futures in addition to critiquing their past and present.

(Multiliteracies: literacy learning and the design of social futures, Cope and Kalantzis (eds), South Yarra, 2000
Understanding basic film codes and conventions – resources

The Learning Federation (TLF)

TLF is developing interactive multimodal learning objects using graphics, text, audio, animation, interactive tools – specifically designed to engage and motivate student learning.

TLF learning objects are based on the most recent research into learning and teaching.

For example Lights camera action!

http://www.thelearningfederation.edu.au

Australian Children’s Television Foundation (ACTF) In the Learning Centre, a section called Exploring Television And Film explains the technical features of television production in detail with lots of examples and linked classroom activities.


Annemaree O’Brien and Vincent Trundle ACMI 2006
Creating screen stories and essential learning

Creating screen stories inspires deep, relevant learning, and connects learning across a diverse range of learning contexts.

(Victorian Essential Learning Standards)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interdisciplinary Learning Domains</th>
<th>Discipline-based Learning Domains</th>
<th>Physical, Personal and Social Learning Domains</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Thinking Processes</td>
<td>• English</td>
<td>• Personal Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Communication</td>
<td>• The Arts</td>
<td>• Interpersonal Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Information and Communications Technology (ICT)</td>
<td>• The Humanities</td>
<td>• Health &amp; Physical Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Science</td>
<td>• LOTE</td>
<td>• Civics &amp; Citizenship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note: Domains in italics are dependent on the focus of the content.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Making films in the classroom

Creating screen stories brings traditional learning and new technologies together in a powerful learning process. With the availability of user-friendly digital cameras and editing software, simple film production is now possible across all disciplines, offering a highly engaging student experience to stimulate and support rich, deep and connected learning.

- Live action
- Animation
- Digital stories

Annemaree O’Brien and Vincent Trundle ACMI 2006
ACMI’s national moving image production competition for students

Live action: *The 2005 Commonwealth Games*
Holy Spirit Primary School NSW

See examples and information online at:

Annemaree O’Brien and Vincent Trundle ACMI 2006
My Story – Digital storytelling in the classroom

Digital storytelling enables students and teachers to create their own stories, weaving together video, photos, art, music, narration, print, and sound effects using simple multimedia publishing tools. It is an individual experience enabling the storyteller to tell a story in their own way within a supportive learning community.

Digital storytelling at ACMI

ACMI is part of international affiliation initiated by the Centre for Digital Storytelling, (Berkeley University, California) that includes such organisations as the BBC. ACMI is Australia's centre for excellence ensuring best practice at an international standard.

Annemaree O'Brien and Vincent Trundle ACMI 2006
Seven elements of Digital Storytelling

A story is made up of content and form.

1. The point of a story
2. A dramatic question
3. Emotional content
4. The Gift of your voice
5. The power of the sound track
6. Economy
7. Pacing

The Centre for Digital Storytelling Berkley www.storycenter.org/

Annemaree O’Brien and Vincent Trundle ACMI 2006
Critical analysis – Reading the game

The Learning Federation (TLF)
TLF learning object Gamemaker

http://www.thelearningfederation.edu.au
Super Sonic: video games and learning

- These activities invite students to reflect on the games they play, to examine and evaluate video games, explore the development of game characters.

- Thinking and talking about video games encourages questioning and learning more about how games work and how they are made — developing essential screen literacy skills and knowledge.

ACMI Screen Education

Our focus is on screen literacy:
The ability to read, understand, analyse, explain, create and appreciate the ways in which screen texts make meaning.
ACMI Games Lab
Exploring games culture
Games Literacy

"Games are a legitimate cultural form that deserve critical analysis in schools just as film, television and literature do”
Dr Andrew Burn, associate director of the Institute of Education's Centre for the Study of Children, Youth and Media

“Games literacy is a way of investigating how games are means of expression and representation, just like writing or drawing”
Caroline Pelletier, Institute of Education at London University
Games Literacy

**Reading**
Producer’s motives
Representations
Genre/Style
Character
World
Social structures
Interface/HUD
Camera position
‘Story’
History
Immersion
And more

**Writing**
Game design
Research
Programming
Art
Audio
Production Manager
Testing
Social Management
Law
Marketing
Journalism
And many more

**Playing**
Communication, Research and Reflection

Examples:
Forums, Clans, Game FAQ, IMing, Magazines, Wikis, Walkthroughs, Blogs, Reviews & Ratings, Cheats, etc, etc,
Games offer much for the Curriculum

- strategic thinking
- planning
- communication
- application of numbers
- negotiating skills
- group decision-making
- data-handling

*Literature Review in Games and Learning Nesta FutureLab 2005*
Examples
(COTS - commercial off the shelf games)

- **Zoo tycoon**
- **Rollercoaster Tycoon**
- **Racing Academy**
Game Creation Examples

- Video games created by primary students
- Winners of Screen It! competition 2005
- Using GameMaker software
  (see www.gamemaker.nl)
ACMI Games Education Programs

- Game Loading Forum
- Sonic Workshops/Ed kit
- Mobile Game creation workshops
- Screen it! competition
- The Movies workshops
- Game creation PD
- Parents Guide
‘The Movies’ & Sim Genre Education Module
(currently under construction)

- Explains what is educational in genre
- VELS Aligned
- 2 Levels (6-7, 8 -10)
- Worksheets
- 1st in the series

Video Game Genres
- **Platform** Relatively simple games: the player chases or avoids characters by jumping onto platforms. (Eg. Sonic the Hedgehog, Super Mario Brothers.)
- **First Person Shooter** (FPS) FPS emphasize shooting and combat and place the player behind a gun or weapon, giving the player the feeling of “being there.” These games tend to be very violent. (Eg. Quake, Unreal, Grand Theft Auto.)
- **Real-Time Strategy** (RTS). The player can strategically direct battles, the game progresses continuously in “real time”, rather than turn-by-turn. (Eg. Age of Empires, Command & Conquer, Close Combat.)
- **Role Playing** (RPGs) The player goes on a quest of some sort overcoming obstacles on the way. (Eg. Everquest, Morrowind, Ultima, Baldur’s Gate.)
- **Adventure** The story is crucial and the player follows clues or uses problem-solving to overcome obstacles and puzzles which must be solved to continue the story. Can be set in fantasy worlds or ancient times. (Eg. Myst, Syberia, Dark Fall, Monkey Island.)
- **Simulators** —The player participates in simulated sporting situations, car races or flies an aircraft. (Eg. Links, Sports Car G2, V8 Super Cars, Flight Simulator.)
- **Others** – MMO, ARG, Serious, LBG, Casual, Etc.
Digital world is constantly being subverted
(by what Mark Prensky has labelled ‘Digital Natives’)

- Playful (- educative)
- Collaborative and Expressive
- Experimental
- Explorative
Machinima (muh-sheen-eh-mah)

• Filmmaking within a real-time, 3D virtual environment.
• A new form of filmmaking that uses computer games technology to 'shoot' films in the virtual reality of a game engine.
• No expensive camera equipment or Software
Machinima Examples

Red vs Blue

Nothing but Red

The Awakening
The Movies Workshop

Who - Yrs 9 - 12
What - Exploring making machinima
        Managing complex systems
Time - 3 and 6 hrs
Why - The students love it and it engages them
        Learning storytelling basics
        Collaborate and Learn to manage a complex system
        Collaborate to make a machinima piece
The Movies Workshop

Equipment (minimum):

- The Movies
- Pentium 3 800
- 3D accelerator video card
- 256 MB RAM
- Projector/Interactive whiteboard/multiple machines

Prep

- Play the game (or PD at ACMI)
- Choose your focus – eg: Machinima, finance and salaries, social & hierarchical system, genre
- Create save games (I can supply) (have a student do this?)

Annemaree O’Brien and Vincent Trundle ACMI 2006
The Movies

The system
The Finances
The People
Advanced Movie Maker Machinima
Concerns and Challenges

- Constraining the game
- Focusing the students
- Playing/understanding enough to ‘keep up’
- Resources, resources resources
ACMI Resources

Information about ACMI school production workshops, screening programs and teacher professional development is online at http://www.acmi.net.au/learn.htm

Online resources include:

- Filmmaking across the curriculum – a beginner’s guide – follow the links at http://www.acmi.net.au/studyguides.htm (from June 20 2006)

- Digital storytelling at ACMI (general) at http://www.acmi.net.au/digitalstorytelling.jsp

For teacher and student programs go to http://www.acmi.net.au/learn.htm

Screen it competition go to www.acmi.net.au/screen_it.htm

ACMI Access Collection has over 40,000 film, video and multimedia titles available to members and the catalogue can be searched online at http://www.acmi.net.au/borrow.htm

Annemaree O’Brien and Vincent Trundle ACMI 2006
Games at acmi

Games Lab
Games Lab celebrates the past, present and future of games, and looks deeper to discover that they are a fascinating reflection of our culture
www.acmi.net.au/games_lab.jsp

‘Playing the Movies’ exhibition
http://www.acmi.net.au/playingthemovies.jsp

Parents Guide
http://www.acmi.net.au/games_resources.htmS

Super Sonic – video games and learning

General Machinima links

Official site of the Academy of Machinima Arts and Sciences and the Machinima Film Festival.
www.machinima.org

Wikipedia on Machinima
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Machinima

Machinima showcase including a vast collection of machinima complete with forums, tools, and a place to submit your machinima
www.machinima.com

Blog/online magazine covering machinima – informative interviews and reviews from one of Machinima’s top filmmakers, Friedrich Kirschner.
www.machinimag.com

Ken Thain’s news site on Machinima and its related topics.
www.3dfilmmaker.com

Red vs Blue – highly popular Machinima series made using the game Halo by the Roosterteeth crew
http://rvb.roosterteeth.com/archive/

Other links

The Movies (the game)
Lionhead Studios The Movies home page
www.lionhead.com/themovies
Demo of the game
www.lionhead.com/themovies/demo.html
The Movies online
http://movies.lionhead.com

Annemaree O’Brien and Vincent Trundle ACMI 2006
Questions Suggestions Comments?

vincent.trundle@acmi.net.au
annemaree.obrien@acmi.net.au

Annemaree O’Brien and Vincent Trundle ACMI 2006
The Moving Image Competition for Australia’s Primary AND Secondary Students

www.acmi.net.au/screen_it

Annemaree O’Brien and Vincent Trundle ACMI 2006